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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5567
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7417
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1163
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 6005
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3146
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1533
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6122
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UNCLAS NEW DELHI 000379

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: BHARAT BALLOT 09: NATIONAL ELECTION DATES ANNOUNCED

¶1. (U) India will go to the polls between April 16 and May 13 to elect a new parliament and put in place a new government. The announcement was made on March 2 by the Indian Election Commission which released an election schedule with voting occurring in five phases beginning on April 16 and ending on May 13. Counting of the votes and announcement of results will be on May 16. The 15th Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament) will convene before June 2. The model Election Code of Conduct, which regulates the activities of parties, candidates and governments during the election campaign, came into immediate effect on March 2.

Rolling Election Schedule

¶2. (U) The distribution of the Lok Sabha's 543 constituencies over the five phases is as follows:

Dates	Number of Districts
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April 16	124
April 23	141
April 30	107
May 7	85
May 13	86

¶3. (U) Given the size, complexity and security needs in certain areas, the election schedule is also phased within some states:

- 5 phases: Jammu and Kashmir; Uttar Pradesh
- 4 phases: Bihar
- 3 phases: Maharashtra; West Bengal
- 2 phases: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa and Punjab
- All other states will have only a single phase.

Concurrent State Assembly Elections

¶4. (U) State assembly elections that are due in Sikkim, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh will take place simultaneous with parliamentary elections in these states. Also going to the

polls will be seven state assembly districts in Jharkhand, Karnataka, Manipur and Nagaland where by-elections are required to fill vacancies in the state legislatures.

Scale of the Elections

15. (U) Other statistics released by the Indian Election Commission illustrate the massive scale of the India's election exercise:

- 714 million voters (increase of 43 million from 2004)
- 828,000 polling booths (increase of 143,000 from 2004)
- 1,100,000 electronic voting machines to be used
- 4,000,000 civil servants to administer the elections
- 2,100,000 million security personnel to be deployed

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